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ST-VITAL
DE FORT-GARRY

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HISTORIQUE

de la

PAROISSE DE ST-VITAL DE FORT-GARRY

à l'occasion de son

25^e ANNIVERSAIRE

16 au 19 octobre 1938



HISTORICAL SKETCH

of the

PARISH OF ST. VITAL OF FORT GARRY

on the occasion of its

25th ANNIVERSARY

October 16 to 19, 1938.



SON EXCELLENCE MGR ALFRED A. SINNOTT, B.D.
Archevêque de Winnipeg.
HIS EXCELLENCY, ARCHBISHOP ALFRED A. SINNOTT, B.D.
Archbishop of Winnipeg.

ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE WINNIPEG.

le 23 septembre 1938.

Chers Paroissiens de St-Vital de Fort-Garry.

Je suis heureux de partager avec vous cette joie et la fierté qui animent vos cœurs, à l'occasion de la publication de cette brochure qui trace l'histoire de la Paroisse de St-Vital de Fort-Garry, en ce vingt-cinquième anniversaire de son érection canonique.

Elles sont nombreuses les années écoulées depuis ces jours déjà lointains; nombreuses aussi les vicissitudes qui ont marqué la vie des premiers catholiques de Fort-Garry; et les événements de ce quart de siècle, qui ont établi votre paroisse dans la situation encourageante dans laquelle elle se trouve présentement, vous ont associés à ce travail magnifique qui se poursuivait encore pour la gloire de Dieu et le bien de la paroisse de St-Vital de Fort-Garry.

Un Jubilé sonne l'heure de l'action de grâces en même temps que l'heure de la reconnaissance. Je m'unis donc à vous tous pour remercier Dieu des nombreux bienfaits qu'Il a daigné répandre sur la paroisse; je m'unis encore à vous, pour honorer la mémoire de ces deux glorieux qui sont passés de cette vie dans l'éternité pour recevoir la récompense due au travail pénible que leur a coûté l'établissement de la Foi dans Fort-Garry, par la fondation de votre Paroisse.

Que la bénédiction de Dieu descende sur vous tous, d'une façon spéciale, en ces jours bénis; et que, dans le cœur de chaque paroissien de St-Vital se réalisent ces paroles du Saint Prophète: "Je les admirerai à ma Montagne Sainte, et je les réjouirai dans ma Maison de prière."

Votre entièrement dévoué en N.-S.,

† ALFRED A. SINNOTT.

Archevêque de Winnipeg.

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE

353 ST. MARY'S AVE.

WINNIPEG, MAN., September 23rd, 1938.

Dearst beloved parishioners of St. Vital of Fort Garry.

I am happy to share with you peace and all of your parish the pride and joy which must be yours, upon the publication of this booklet and History commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the canonical erection of the Parish of St. Vital at Fort Garry.

Many have been the years which have passed and many have been the vicissitudes endured by the Catholics of Fort Garry since those pioneer days, and the events which have led through the course of time to the present encouraging condition of the parish have not excluded you from taking part in the splendid work which is yet being done for God and His Church in St. Vital at Fort Garry.

A Jubilee is a time of thanksgiving and a time of gratitude, and I join with you all in thanking God for the many benefits which He has bestowed upon this Parish; I join with you in honouring those fervent souls who have gone before us to receive the reward of their labours in establishing the Faith in Fort Garry through the medium of this your Parish.

May the blessing of God descend upon you all in a very special manner at this time, and may the words of the Holy Prophet find realization in the heart of every member of the Parish of St. Vital: "I will bring thee into my Holy Mount, and will make thee joyful in my House of Prayer."

Very devotedly yours in Xro.,

† ALFRED A. SINNOTT.

Archbishop of Winnipeg.



LE R. P. J. A. CARON, C.S.B.
Premier curé résident.



M. L'abbé JACQUES BERTRAND
Curé, Sept. 1917 - Oct. 1929.



PREMIÈRE CHAPELLE-ÉCOLE ST-VITAL — BÉNIE PAR MGR TACHÉ, O.M.I.
8 SEPT. 1885.

Historique de la paroisse St-Vital de Fort-Garry

L'AN de Galor dix-neuf cent trente-huit, dans le vingt-cinquième anniversaire de l'érection canonique de notre paroisse par Son Eminence Languevin, sera une année mémorable entre toutes et nous avons pensé intéressant pour tous d'en raconter l'histoire.

St-Vital, à ses débuts, n'était qu'une modeste petite mission. Le 4 avril 1861 Sa Grandeur Monseigneur Taché vint dire la première messe dans la chapelle de la petite école dirigée par les Sœurs de Charité (Sœurs Grises) de St-Boniface. Cette école était située à l'est de la Rivière Rouge, exactement à l'opposé de l'emplacement de notre église actuelle.

Monseigneur Taché réalisant bien la nécessité urgente d'avoir une école pour la population de ce district, fit construire une maison-école dont il confia la direction aux Sœurs de Charité. Sœur L'Espérance-Yoville en fut la pre-

mière supérieure avec une assistante, Sœur Esther. Cette petite école qui, à ce moment-là, semblait être obscure, fut bénie par Sa Grandeur le 8 septembre 1860, le jour de la fête de la Nativité de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie. Il fallut lui donner un nom. Le coadjuteur de Sa Grandeur était alors Monseigneur Vital Grandin, et sans doute, par une prescience inspirée, Monseigneur Taché donna à l'école le nom de St-Vital.

Les Sœurs éducatrices devaient parcourir 5 milles afin d'entendre leur messe et retourner leurs forces et leur courage auprès de leur Mère à la Maison Provinciale, pour braver toutes les difficultés inévitables dans leur nouveau champ d'action. Toutes leurs prières et leurs vœux se tendaient vers un but: celui de posséder une petite chapelle où elles auraient le bonheur d'adorer leur Dieu et d'y entendre la Sainte Messe. Leurs prières furent exaucées et le 4 avril 1861, Sa Grandeur Monseigneur Taché vint dire la première messe à la maison-école et dédia la petite chapelle à saint Vital. Dès ce jour, les bonnes religieuses et la population du village eurent le grand avantage d'avoir la messe deux fois par semaine.



MGR VITAL GRANDIN, O.S.B.
Coadjuteur de Mgr Taché, a.m.s.



M. L'abbé MAURICE COURNOYER
Cord. arch.
REV. M. COURNOYER, PASTOR



L'ÉCOLE ET LE PRESBYTÈRE ACTUELS
CHURCH & RECTORY

L'humble petite mission est, comme tant d'autres, à soulever un nombre incalculable de difficultés et même de malheurs: le 22 avril 1861, peu après sa bénédiction, les eaux de la Rivière Rouge dépassèrent les bords de leur lit et rampèrent de façon si alarmante vers la petite chapelle, que les Sœurs risquaient le danger, aidées de leur archevêque, d'obtenir des planches aux portes et aux fenêtres et, montant dans une charette, se rendirent à St-Boniface pour y trouver refuge. Monseigneur Taché les suivit à cheval, transportant pieusement le Saint-Sacrement à sa cathédrale. Les quelques personnes présentes qui avaient aidé à barricader leur bien-aimée chapelle, s'agenouillèrent tristement au passage de leur Dieu et des bonnes Sœurs qui semblaient les laisser seuls dans leur grand malheur. Larmes et prières ardentes demandèrent à Dieu de multiplier la perfide rivière et de sauver leur chère petite chapelle afin d'y abriter leur Jésus bien-aimé. Dieu entendit les prières de ces chétives servantes, école et chapelle furent préservées de la fureur des eaux et bientôt les Sœurs vinrent reprendre leur tâche.



LOUIS RIEL.

Deux religieuses eurent successivement la charge de l'école St-Vital, ce sont de:

1860 à 64.	Les Sœurs	L'Espérance et Ethier.
1864 à 68.	" "	Goulet et Royale.
1868 à 69.	" "	Royale et Connolly.
1869 à 70.	" "	Ethier et Connolly.
1870 à 80.	" "	Ethier et Brouillet.
1880 à 87.	" "	Lamoureux et Samson.

Des archives du Département d'Education de l'année 1871 nous avons pu le rapport suivant écrit par M. Royale, alors inspecteur d'école.

"L'école de St-Vital est spacieuse, bien éclairée, mais avec une ventilation déficiente. La classe, sous la direction des Sœurs de Charité, est en excellente condition et peu d'écoles peuvent se flatter d'obtenir un tel résultat en tant qu'organisation et progrès des élèves dont le nombre est de 44 (38 garçons et 26 filles). Il y a 5 heures $\frac{1}{2}$ de classe chaque jour excepté le samedi."

Beaucoup se rappellent de Sœur Samson, qui résida en ce moment à la Maison Provinciale à St-Boniface et jouit d'une excellente santé; d'elle, nous tenons une description fidèle de la première chapelle.

"Le sanctuaire, nous dit-elle, était séparé du reste de l'école par des portes peintes. Il y avait juste aux de place pour l'autel, une chaise et un prie-Dieu pour l'archevêque et un prêtre-assistant, et une petite étagère de chaque côté de l'autel. Nous gardions là le Saint-Sacrement, devant lequel Mme Louis Riel venait régulièrement s'agenouiller et prier. Nous avions la messe deux fois par semaine, dite par différents prêtres, Monseigneur Taché, Monseigneur Grandin, le Père Melanconneux, et Monseigneur Dugas."

La petite communauté connut des heures bien sombres le 16 novembre 1884. Ce jour-là vit à Regina, l'arrestation de Louis Riel, grand homme de

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ST-VITAL. MAN

vocation de Saint Vital martyr dont la fête se célèbre le vingt huit Août, le territoire auvaut l'entée comme suit

Au Sud : Le terre Nord du lot 124, est vingt-quatre de la paroisse de St Norbert

Au Nord : La terre Sud de la ville de Winnipeg

A l'Est : Le Rivière Rouge

A l'Ouest : L'extrémité des lots de la paroisse de St Vital.

Pour être le dite Paroisse catholique "La Paroisse Catholique de Saint-Vital Manitoba" entièrement sous notre juridiction et la charge par les curés ou desservants que Nous ou nos vicaires jugeront à propos d'y envoyer de se conformer en tout aux règles de discipline ecclésiastique établies dans cet Archidocèse spécialement d'administrer les sacrements de prêcher la parole de Dieu et de donner les autres secours de la Sainte Religion aux fidèles de la dite paroisse enjoignant à tous et de porter respect et obéissance aux dits curés ou desservants et d'aider à l'entretien du culte et à l'entretien des dits curés ou desservants.

La dite paroisse "La Paroisse Catholique de Saint Vital Manitoba" est par les présentes canoniquement érigée et devient un corps politique et incorporé. Et par le seul fait du présent décret de la dite paroisse catholique. "La Paroisse Catholique de Saint Vital Manitoba" devient une corporation civile en vertu du chapitre XXIII des statuts du Manitoba, 18 Victoria (22 Juillet 1874)

Sera le présent décret lu et publié au prône de la première messe vénéralable qui aura lieu dans la dite paroisse Catholique, après la réception du dit décret

Donné à Saint Boniface sous Notre Sceau et Sceau du diocèse et le contre-sceau de Notre Chancelier le cinquième jour du mois de Janvier A D 1914

Signé : + ADELARD. O M I,
Arch. de St Boniface.

Par mandement de Sa Grandeur Monseigneur l'Archevêque
J H PRUD'HOMME Prie
Chancelier

Les prêtres belges des paroisses de St Vital furent une fois de plus, évincés au delà même de toute espérance. Les Sœurs Cross Owen et Sanson s'installèrent dans la nouvelle école dans l'automne 1912 et se conduisirent avec grand succès aidées et encouragées par leurs guides spirituels les Révérends Pères Rédempteurs. Hélas en 1917 les Sœurs durent quitter leur chère école qui, depuis fut devenue et est encore école publique. Leur départ a été une perte immense pour la paroisse et les prières se continuent pour avoir de nouveau une école paroissiale afin que le vœu si cher de notre Bien Aimé Archevêque se réalise "Une éducation catholique pour les enfants catholiques"

* * *

En 1914 les Pères Rédempteurs sous la direction du Rév. Père Caron blâteront temporairement, après quelques années sur l'avenue Manitoba. Deux acres de terrain furent achetés pour y bâtir monastère et église. A l'ouest six lots devaient être l'emplacement d'un couvent pour les Sœurs, mais tout cela ne fut qu'un rêve!

De nombreuses familles belges, nouvellement arrivées d'Europe et travaillant les plus riches, s'installèrent dans le district pour y établir des terres. nous en comptons aujourd'hui cent avec soixante familles parmi lesquelles celle de M. Constant Bommey établi à St Vital depuis 1904. En cette année-là il consacra les terrains qui forment encore aujourd'hui le Manitoba Dairy M. Constant Bommey a toujours aidé la paroisse dans ses projets

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Les Pères Rédempteurs comprennent que ces familles demandent souvent beaucoup d'avoir des instructions religieuses données en leur langue. Nous appelons Revereux Pierre Lussier et Chapeau, de temps en temps, viennent prêcher en français.

Ainsi donc de 1911 à 1917 les Pères Rédempteurs ont se consacrer à St Vital dans ces mêmes conditions comme paroisse peu plus sous leur juridiction, et on peut les considérer comme les fondateurs de la paroisse actuelle. Des records tenus par les Pères Rédempteurs nous avons copié s'ensuit le suivant.

Le 20 mars 1918, Sa Grandeur l'Archevêque de St Boniface nous ayant confié la cure de la paroisse de St Anne des Chénos, nous personnel des autres des changements dans notre communauté de St Vital. Le Père Lussier et le Père Charles ont été des plus pour la nouvelle communauté et ils partent en route le même de par les Pères. Le Père Lussier demeure pour assister le Père Lussier C. S. R. dans sa nouvelle position de Supérieur de St Anne des Chénos. Il n'y aura pas de messe mardi à St Vital, comme ce sera comme à l'habitude, du moins jusqu'à l'intermission de l'Archevêque de Winnipeg le 24 septembre 1918.

Des records, encore, nous avons copié ce qui suit.

A cause des nombreux développements la mission mère des Rédempteurs de la Province canadienne française pour l'ouest du Canada sera à St Anne des Chénos. On ne suppose pas nécessairement l'abandon de St Vital car le Père Lussier demeure et jusqu'à ce que l'Archevêque de Winnipeg ne nomme un successeur.

Il est intéressant de savoir que l'année 1918 fut particulièrement prospère pour la petite paroisse de St Vital. La somme de \$2993.12 avait été recueillie pour en couvrir les dépenses et obligations.

Les Rédempteurs quinquante donc St Vital au printemps 1917 pour un champ d'action plus vaste. St Anne des Chénos et M. l'abbé Domestien leur succède jusqu'en 1921 quand M. l'abbé Caron est le remplaçant. M. Caron ne resta que quelque temps à St Vital et, comme la se développement de la paroisse pour le 10 septembre 1919 fut remplacé par M. l'abbé Jacques Bertrand qui resta mais avec en nous avec le noble travail bien connu par les Rédempteurs. Le modeste logis que se par ailleurs de paroisse en est devenu l'église et aussi le point de l'église. M. le curé Bertrand aide de ses paroissiens, bien une petite maison en fait de église qui bien-ou parait trop petite pour un presbytère. Elle fut vendue et M. Bertrand acheta temporairement un bâtiment autre des églises. Vous le rapport de Son Excellence Monseigneur S. n'est après la première visite pastorale en 1921.

Le 1er mai 1921, on fut une première visite officielle de la paroisse de St Vital, on trouva toutes choses en bon ordre et on a vu qu'il fallait M. le curé Bertrand et ses paroissiens. Depuis quelques années et surtout, depuis la nomination du pasteur actuel, cette paroisse a progressé. Il y a 11 familles catholiques. A l'occasion de cette visite, on confirme 29 enfants à 9 filles et 20 garçons.

+ ALFRED ARTHUR,
Archevêque de Winnipeg

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
353 ST MARTIN'S AVE

WINNIPEG, 16 juin 1922

Aux Paroissiens de Saint Vital

Je remercie avec beaucoup de satisfaction que votre paroisse s'organiser petit à petit et qu'elle progresse admirablement d'année en année. L'arrondissement de la vie spirituelle se fait déjà remarquer et bien qu'il y ait

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25th. ANNIVERSARY

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au bord de la Rivière Rouge. Il obtint permission pour le transfert des corps du vieux au nouveau cimetière au printemps de 1929 et nous devons le remercier pour un tel accomplissement.

En octobre 1929 en considération de son dévouement à ses deux paroisses. Son Excellence Monseigneur Sinnott offrit à M. Bertrand un poste d'avancement qu'il accepta et il fut remplacé le 29 octobre 1929 par M. l'abbé Maurice Cournoyer de Swan River qui est le pasteur de la paroisse de St Vital exclusivement.

En effet St Vital devait avoir un prêtre résident et immédiatement après la nomination de M. l'abbé Cournoyer les paroissiens joignirent leurs efforts pour avoir leur prêtre et pour lui donner un presbytère convenable. Deux lots furent achetés des Rédemptoristes de Ste Anne de Beaupré une quête pour obtenir des fonds afin de commencer à bâtir fut faite et enfin le presbytère fut complété le 15 décembre 1930. Le prêtre s'y installa le 18.

VISITE PASTORALE, 15 JUIN 1930.

Le 15 juin fête de la Sainte Trinité nous avons fait notre visite pastorale dans la paroisse de St Vital de Fort Garry et nous avons administré le sacrement de confirmation à 76 enfants. Monseigneur A. A. Chénier V. G. P. A. et M. l'abbé Krüger Chaplain de l'Hôpital Méricorde, nous accompagnaient.

La messe fut chantée par M. le curé Cournoyer à 9.30. Après la messe deux solistes firent une adresse en français et en anglais du nom des paroissiens.

Dans notre réponse nous avons remercié les enfants et avons fait comprendre aux parents l'importance du sacrement que leurs enfants viennent de recevoir. Nous avons aussi insisté sur l'importance de l'éducation chrétienne pour leurs enfants.

Nous avons aussi dit aux paroissiens de St Vital de Fort Garry combien Nous sommes heureux de savoir que dans un avenir très prochain leur petit foyer habitera par M. Cournoyer est certainement digne d'être complimenté pour son dévouement à la paroisse depuis sa nomination. Les dames de la paroisse doivent être aussi complimentées pour leur bon travail elles ont secondé admirablement les efforts de leur pasteur. Nous les remercions.

Nous approuvons de tout cœur et benissons le projet de construction d'un presbytère et nous sommes persuadé que non seulement cela facilitera le travail du pasteur mais aussi améliorera l'esprit chrétien et la joie des paroissiens de St-Vital de Fort Garry.

† ALFRED ARTHUR.
Arch. de Winnipeg

Le presbytère fut béni officiellement par Son Excellence Monseigneur Sinnott le 6 janvier 1931. Dans l'après midi la L. que des Femmes Catholiques regut plus de cent invités.

En 1931 la paroisse St Michel de Selkirk fut donnée à M. l'abbé J. Krucinski et M. le curé Cournoyer put se consacrer entièrement à St Vital.

Le travail d'argent ne se fait plus difficile à cause de la période de dépression depuis 1929. Cependant nous pouvons nous flatter d'avoir aujourd'hui un beau presbytère entouré d'un beau terrain agrémenté en été de magnifiques fleurs. Notre église sera une ruhe et spacieuse et confortable. Un paroissien M. A. Dyer avec aide de nombreux Ranc Vastorhoust Ierde Larocque Jos Carrière J. Beauchamp César Laboureur et quelques autres entrepris de décorer l'intérieur de l'église en 1931. Le travail est artistique et reste une preuve de la foi et du dévouement à Dieu de ces bons catholiques.

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AUTRE VISITE PASTORALE

Le dimanche 23 mars 1891, Nous sommes allés au presbytère de St Vital et Port George. Après avoir assisté à la Grand Messe, l'après-midi par M. le curé Lacombe, Nous avons adressés et les membres de l'église anglicane de St-Vital et son clergé.

Il y a eu un échange de lettres avec le pasteur. Nous avons aussi assisté à la messe de la Chapelle des Indiens, et nous avons vu une petite école indienne que Nous avons accompagnée pendant sa prière. Il y a eu aussi un échange de lettres avec le curé de la paroisse de St-Vital. Mais nous sommes allés voir le curé de la paroisse de St-Vital et de la paroisse de St-Vital. Nous avons aussi assisté à la messe de la Chapelle des Indiens, et nous avons vu une petite école indienne que Nous avons accompagnée pendant sa prière.

Après avoir vu le presbytère, nous sommes allés voir le curé de la paroisse de St-Vital et de la paroisse de St-Vital. Nous avons aussi assisté à la messe de la Chapelle des Indiens, et nous avons vu une petite école indienne que Nous avons accompagnée pendant sa prière.

† ALFRED A. SINNOTT,
Arch. de Winnipeg.

En 1894, au début de l'été, nous sommes allés à la messe de la paroisse de St-Vital et de la paroisse de St-Vital. Nous avons aussi assisté à la messe de la Chapelle des Indiens, et nous avons vu une petite école indienne que Nous avons accompagnée pendant sa prière.

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A notre paroisse nous avons

'Ad Multos Annos'

— 19 —

R22 1.79

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History of Parish of St. Vital of Fort Garry

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The last use of the phrase dates back to the year 1840 before *Blennius* entered its common use and may be considered as one of the oldest uses of the word *Blennius*.

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by the Archbishop on the 28th day of September 1860 feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. His Grace placed the undertaking under the patronage of St Vital which was the name borne by his Coadjutor Monseigneur Vital Grandin.

The Good Sisters would travel back and forth to St. Boniface a distance of some five miles for their daily Mass, and to receive from their Mother in the Provincial House comfort and strength to sustain the hardships encountered in the new field. They looked forward with longing for the day when it would be their privilege to have Holy Mass in the little Chapel and to have the Blessed Sacrament constantly in their midst.

On the 4th of April 1861, His Grace Archbishop Tache and the First Mass, and formally dedicated the little chapel to St. Vital whose feast falls on the 28th of April.

Harriet and her good Sisters were to have the consolation of assisting at the Eucharistic Sacrifice every week, a privilege which would enhance the



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sont heureux de s'associer aux paroissiens de St-Vital de Fort-Garry pour célébrer un anniversaire qui rappelle de si touchants souvenirs
Puisse GRANDIN s'ajouter à St-Vital au prochain Jubilé



the superior advantage of the little community which formed the Catholic population.

The infant Mission had received its share of those sufferings and trials which go to the making of a big mission. On the 22nd of April 1834, a long time after the burning of the Mission on the waters of the Red River were alarming, and the river, rapid & earthy, was its master. But a man who in the school and chapel were in great danger of being separated by the ever rising waters. Sister I. Expanset-Yves in the baptistry with Sister a hair leaving danger and after having saved with his hand of the Archbishop brought a man by windows and another in the St Boniface a man with the hand of the Archbishop following in a direction on some back, among generally the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral. The few persons present who had helped in her saving the mission and doors, in saving the had appeared there dead and good Sister, leaving her mortal hair in existence in the water, in the Blessed Sacrament. There were others on the river of how good Christians and ministers did their prayers ascend to Heaven, asking the good God to keep the faithful waters from drying up their little chapel and to bring back to them, even in the Holy Sacrament.

The 3 persons were attended, the school resumed the form of the Red River and after the waters had receded, the Sisters came back to resume their work. God had spared their little school and chapel.

The following were the Sisters in charge of the school and chapel on the East Side of the River.

- 1860-64 Sister I. Expanset-Yves-De and Sister Ethier
- 1864-68 Sister Goulet and Sister Royale.
- 1868-69 Sister Royale and Sister Connolly
- 1869-70 Sister Ethier and Sister Connolly
- 1870-80 Sister Ethier and Sister Brouillette
- 1880-87 Sister Lacombe and Sister Samson

We take from the records of the Department of Education of the year 1877 the report of Mr. Robit, then school inspector on his duties.

The school house of St. Boniface is well illuminated, but of defective construction. The windows are done in the form of having in an oblique position and the school is the same kind of school house, on an oval standing on a floor is raised to be more for the advancement of its pupils. The number of pupils 64 (34 boys and 26 girls)."

Sister Mathieu, whose memory still lives in the minds of many here and who is still in good health at the Provincial House at St. Boniface tells of the first chapel in these words:

The two wings were separated by folding doors. There were vest rooms for the altar with a small altar on each side and a very large and chapel for the Archbishop and a brother priest. The Blessed Sacrament was kept. One and only one could hear Mass. I. Rob came regularly to visit the Blessed Sacrament. Mass was said twice a week but the service changed very often. I remember saying Sister Yves in Mass frequently. In the Monastery of the Convent Father Macdonald and Monseigneur Dupin."

The 24th of November 1834 was a dark day for the little community and so too for the whole Province and Dominion for it was on that day that a great number of men, imbued with principles of justice and righteousness and who loved God and Country, gave up life for Christ in Louis Riel, whose execution took place in Regina on that day. The following day, Tuesday the 17th Monseigneur Dupin offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the little Chapel for the repose of the soul of the great man and patriot Louis Riel. The family and relatives assisted devoutly at the service. Right do we say? but we don't for the humble beginning of this little mission would be incomplete if we did not mention it for the little Chapel was no dear to Louis Riel and to his relatives.

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In September 1887 for an season known to the writer the little chapel and school were closed. The good people of this side of the river, i. e. the West side, travelled to St. Boniface or to St. Norbert for Divine Service. Those who remember those days when faith was returned a living to be proud of must know that on Sunday morning they did not mind walking to St. Boniface or to St. Norbert some five miles in order to assist at Mass and receive Holy Communion.

Among the families that surrounded the little chapel on either side of the Red River we might mention MM. Andrieu, Nant, Michel, Deman, Les Carrières, Joseph, Laurence, Louis, Samuillet, Edouard, Perrault, Amable, Gaudin, Jacques, Ritchot, Benjamin, Nant, Baptiste, Laurence, J. B. Plouffe, Paul, Plouffe, Miss Pin, Nant, Fournier, Lamoignon. The Honourable Solomon Hamelin who was a member of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia. This family and many others migrated in the early years to the Dominion and helped to establish the beautiful parish of Ste. Rose du Lac.

Mr. and Mrs. John Nant, who arrived in the Spring of 1879 from Scotland, are well known today as real promoters of the parish and always ardent supporters of St. Vital of Fort Garry. Mr. John Nant died in 1924. His wife, Jane Nant, still enjoys good health, and is yet very active in all parochial undertakings.

* * *

For a few years the little community was quite disorganised. It was as a flock without a shepherd. Then new hope came. A home property of the Hon. Solomon Hamelin, son of Mr. John Nant, on the banks of the River, and being at request by Mr. Lavette, his son-in-law, was offered to the Archbishop as a school and house for the priest and his community. In 1907 the Sisters came back and for three years taught school. Most Mass was said once a week, as in the little chapel across the river. We are grateful to the Hon. Solomon Hamelin for having placed his home and kept alive the mission even to this day. He and many others of those days owed God and their descendants may be happy to look back to those pioneers with just pride.

In 1911 A. bishop, anglican, interviewed the Redemptorist Fathers of Ste. Anne de Beaupre as to the possibility of taking over the new Mission. In that summer a new school had been started, where the present school now stands, and it became imperative that the rights were laid out about having a shepherd of their own. This was a matter of consideration on the 1st of August 1911.



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Rev. Father Lemieux, C. S. S. R. accepted the new territory and immediately started its organization. The people ever more had their prayers answered, and look forward to again have Divine Service in their midst. In the fall of 1913, papers were prepared for the canonical erection of the parish, and were delivered to the Redemptionist Fathers on the 5th day of January 1914. We quote this valuable document:

DISCRET OF CANONICAL ERECTION
OF "LA PAROISSE CATHOLIQUE DE ST VITAL"

Louis Philippe Adéard Langevin, by the mercy of God and favor of the Holy See, Archbishop of St Boniface

To all those to whom these presents shall come we wish to make known that we erect by the present as a catholic parish under the name of "La Paroisse Catholique de St Vital" under the invocation of St Vital martyr whose feast is celebrated the 28th day of April, the following territory with these limits:

To the South: The northern limits of lot 124 of the Parish of St Norbert

To the North: The southern limits of the City of Winnipeg

To the East: The Red River

To the West: The extremity of the lots of the Parish of St Vital.

For the said catholic parish "La Paroisse Catholique de St Vital", Manitoba entirely under our jurisdiction, in charge of the pastors or acting pastors, which we or our successors see fit to send them, we confirm in all and always to the rules and discipline established in our diocese, especially to administer the Sacraments to preach the word of God and to give the help of religion to all those in need, with the understanding that they owe respect and obedience to the said pastors or acting pastors and to provide for their maintenance.

Now by this simple fact of this present decree the said parish "La Paroisse Catholique de St-Vital" becomes a civil corporate body by virtue of Chap. XXII of the statutes of Manitoba 18th Victoria (22 July 1874).

The present decree shall be read and published at the first Sunday High Mass which will be said in the new parish, after the reception of the said decree.

Given at Saint Boniface, under our hand and seal and the countenance of our Chancellor this 5th day of January in the year of our Lord A. D. 1914

+ ADELARD O. M. I.
Archbishop of St. Boniface

By command of His Grace, the Most Rev. Louis Philippe Adéard Langevin

(Sgt.) J. H. PRUD'HOMME
Chancellor

The little mission, with so humble beginning, had now been recognized as a canonically erected parish, and this year we are proud of celebrating its 25th anniversary.

The Grey Nuns (Sisters of Charity) had moved to the new school in the fall of 1912 under the direction of Sister Owen and Sister Samson and conducted with great success the parochial school, while having the comforts of religion from the Redemptionist Fathers. It was and will be, with great regret, and no fault of the Sisters that we see them leave for the last time St. Vital in 1917. We today regret their departure and hope that in some near future the parish will again be blessed with a parochial school. We hope that

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our governments will finally yield to our petitions and grant us that which our Beloved Archbishop holds so dearly a catholic education for catholic children.

* * *

In 1914 the Redemptorist Fathers under the direction of Father Caron, C.S.S.R. built the present temporary church, situated on Manitoba Ave. Some two acres of land had been bought from Mr. H. Chevier, once the property of Mr. Joseph Lacombe, ex M.L.A., on which the Fathers were contemplating the building a monastery and church. Also on the west side the Gory Nease had six lots on which to build a convent, but alas it was all a dream.

A great many Belgium families had arrived from Europe and finding the pasture wonderful, went into the dairy business. To day we count eleven dairy farmers in our parish, with over sixty families in all.

We may recall here one who has always been devoted to this parish, since his arrival in 1904 we mean Mr. Constant Bonmyt. He built in that year the present buildings on Walter Ave. Manitoba Dairy and has always been an ardent supporter of the parish.

With the coming of these Flemish families it was thought wise to give to these good people some instructions in their own language. The Redemptorist Fathers soon provided for that and once in a while Father Lortant and Father Chappel would address them in Flemish.

Hence from 1913 to 1917 did the Redemptorist Fathers labor in this parish at its very beginning and are so to speak the founders of St. Vital as a parish, because it was under their jurisdiction that it was canonically erected. It is our ambition to bring to a glorious end a work so humbly started and make of St. Vital of Fort Garry a flourishing parish of this great Archbishopric of Winnipeg.

We take from the records of the Redemptorist Fathers the following extract:

August 20, 1916.

"His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface having confided to our care the parish of Ste. Anne des Cheneaux this nomination will effect some changes in the personnel of our community at St. Vital. Father Lortant and Brother Chappel have been designated for the new community. They will leave this week and will be replaced by Father Caron, C.S.S.R., leave tomorrow to return Father Trudell, C.S.S.R., in his new position as Superior of Ste. Anne des Cheneaux. His mass Tuesday at St. Vital. Antwerpals at usual at least until the enthronement of the Archbishop of Winnipeg."

September 24th, 1916

"Following new developments the mother house of the Redemptorists, for the French Canadian province in western Canada will be at Ste. Anne des Cheneaux. This new order of things does not necessarily mean the abandonment of St. Vital for a Father will reside here until the Archbishop of Winnipeg makes a decision."

December 1916.

"We take from the records a very successful year had been realized. A total sum of \$7999.12 had been raised which speaks very well for the little community at 1916."

October 1st, 1916.

"The Father designated to administer the parish until His Grace the Archbishop of Winnipeg has named one will be Rev. Father Lortant."

* * *

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And so in the Spring of 1917 the Redemptorists left St. Vital for a more promising field. Srs Anne des Chênes and were succeeded by Rev. Father Dumas in. The good priest showed here but for a year and being refused in the Spring 1918 by Father C. Cassa.

Father Cassa who only here for a short time did much for the betterment of the parish. He was succeeded on the 19th day of September, 1919, by Rev. Jacques Bertrand.

* * *

Father Bertrand started immediately to bring to a success the noble work of the Redemptorist Fathers.

PASTORAL VISITATION OF HIS GRACE, THE ARCHBISHOP OF WINNIPEG — 1921

The first day of May 1921 I made my first official visit in this parish of St. Vital. I have found everything in order and have been to address prayer prayers to Rev. Father J. Bertrand and his parishioners. Since a few years and especially since the nomination of the actual pastor this parish has shown some progress. There are 88 catholic families.

On the second of this visit I have confirmed 29 children (9 girls and 20 boys)."

† ALFRED ARTHUR
Archbishop of Winnipeg.

Realizing that since the church being situated on Mainway Ave. and the little shelter in the rear of the school was quite a distance away involved with the heat of the people to build a new Rectory in front of the church and so with a very short time erected the small building which was found afterwards to be far too small for the needs of the day. Finding difficulty with the building it was disposed of and Father resided for a while in the shelter at the rear of the church. This was not a suitable place for a priest and plans were made to find more suitable quarters. We quote a letter from the Archbishop of Winnipeg to this effect:

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
353 ST. MARY'S AVE

WINNIPEG, June 16th, 1922

To the Parishioners of St. Vital

I have noted with deep satisfaction that your parish is being gradually organized and is making year by year substantial progress. The spiritual life has given many signs of growth and whilst there is still much to be desired the constant and zealous ministrations of a good priest are producing their effect in the better attendance at church services and in the frequentation of the sacraments. The hope is indeed well founded that within a very short time St. Vital will take its place among the best parishes in and around the City of Winnipeg.

I desire to draw your attention to-day to a matter that cannot hope escape your notice and that demands immediate action. Your Parish is without a suitable residence. The situation may not be due to any neglect on your part, but you will admit at once that it should not continue any longer than what is absolutely necessary. What is now provided is a mere makeshift unfit for human habitation and we cannot permit that any of our priests be subjected to treatment which would be unbefitting to their sacred character and at the same time seriously reflect on the faith and generosity of the faithful.

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My wish is, therefore, that the Parishioners of St. Vital should take counsel together and submit to me within the shortest delay possible the steps they are disposed to take, in order to provide their parish with a suitable parsonage. I am aware that it is a question of finance, but the additional service will not be a serious burden. I all work together and each one does his share. I strongly recommended that the heads of families bind themselves in writing to give so much per year, payable monthly, in order that the cost may be equitably divided and we have the assurance that it will be defrayed within a reasonable time.

Were we to be obliged to withdraw the priest from St. Vital — and we cannot tolerate his continued residence there under existing conditions — much of the work already accomplished would be undone and the future of the parish seriously compromised.

I have confidence in your goodwill and generosity and I commend the matter to your immediate consideration. Knowing your attachment to Holy Church and your appreciation of the benefits of a priest resident in your midst, I do not hesitate to ask from you this further sacrifice, necessary to the continued prosperity and development of your parish.

Most cordially I bless you, and beg God to bestow upon you His choicest graces.

† ALFRED A. SINNOTT,
Archbishop of Winnipeg

Obtaining no immediate results and seeing no possibility for a new rectory, Rev. Father Bertrand moved to St. Michel of Selkirk and so from 1921 to 1924 Fr. Vézé was again without a resident priest and became temporarily a mission of Selkirk.

Rev. Father J. Bertrand labored here since September 19 1919 to October 28 1929 and will be long remembered as a most zealous priest. He had at heart the welfare both spiritual and material of the parish. Every Sunday and feast of obligation he would travel the three miles between both churches to administer to the needs of the parishioners of St. Vital. His interest in matters of Education of the children was always noticeable and quite successful.

A great deed performed by Father Bertrand was the acquisition of a new site for our parish cemetery along the banks of the Red River.



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The parsonage acquired by the Redemptorist Fathers was quite a distance from the church and very hard to arrive at on account of the roads. It was the general thought among the people that a more suitable site be obtained from the municipality. Father Bertrand immediately through his efforts obtained with a few dollars in exchange, six acres beautifully situated along the Red River.

Permission was obtained from the courts for the removal of the bodies from the old to the new cemetery in the Spring of 1919. It now stands as a great deed accomplished by Father Bertrand.

In October 1919 considering his good work among the people of St. Vital and Sackville His Grace the Archbishop of Winnipeg offered Father Bertrand a promotion to a new field which Father accepted and he was succeeded by Rev. Father Maurice Cournoyer on October 29, 1919, who came from Swan River, Manitoba, and is to this day the pastor of St. Vital of Fort Garry.

* * *

Under our administration two lots were bought from the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Anne de Beaupre in the Spring of 1910, and a beautiful story and half bungalow was built as a Rectory in the same year.

PASTORAL VISIT (15th of June, 1910)

The 15th of June 1910 the feast of the Blessed Trinity, we have made our pastoral visit in the parish of St. Vital of Fort Garry, and have administered the sacrament of Confirmation to 14 children. Mgr. A. A. Charron, V. C. P. A. and Rev. Father Kessler, Chaplain of Muencholding Hospital accompanied us.

The High Mass was sung by the pastor, Rev. M. Cournoyer, at 9:30. After Mass, two children read us an address in French and English in the name of the parishioners.

In our answer we thank the children and we have impressed upon the parents the importance of the sacrament their children were to receive. We stressed also the importance of Christian education for their children.

We also mentioned to the parishioners of St. Vital of Fort Garry how happy we were to know that in the near future their pastor would reside in their midst. Rev. M. Cournoyer certainly is worthy of praise for his devotion to the parish since his appointment.

The Ladies of the parish are to be praised for their great help during the year. They admirably second all the efforts of the pastor and we thank them for it.

We do, with all our heart, we approve and bless the project of construction of the Rectory and we are persuaded that this new project not only will it facilitate the ministry of the pastor but will also bring an improvement of Christian spirit and piety of the parishioners of St. Vital of Fort Garry.

† ALFRED ARTHUR
Archbishop of Winnipeg.

No doubt that St. Vital should have a resident priest, and immediately after our nomination ways and means were taken to bring back the pastor in our midst and give him a suitable home. It was quite an undertaking, but the people understood it necessary and funds were raised to facilitate the task. Building started September 27, 1910, and was completed by December 15 of the same year. The pastor took residence December 8, 1910.

It was officially blessed by His Grace Our Beloved Archbishop on January 6, 1911. In the afternoon the Catholic Women's League received the guests which numbered well over the hundred.

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In the Fall of 1931 the parish of St. Michel of Selkirk was given to Rev. Father J. Kociemba and again St. Vital of Fort Garry had its own Pastor, living in the parish.

The task of organizing and being handicapped by the depression that we all remember well, since 1929 was a most difficult one. Nevertheless we can boast of having to-day a most beautiful Rectory with attractive grounds, the best in Manitoba, with a good church, well decorated to the inside, the work of one of our parishioners Mr. Alphonse Devienne. In the Spring of 1933 Mr. Devienne with Mr. René Vantouhou, Emile Larocque, Joseph Cormier, J. Beauchamp, Oscar Labonté and a few others undertook to paint and decorate the church. One to-day may be quite proud of the work done by Mr. Devienne and his helpers. It stands as a great tribute of his faith and love of God. Although the church itself not being so elaborate as others, is very well for Divine Service, because one must remember that it was built as a temporary church in 1854.

PASTORAL VISIT

"On Sunday May 28, 1933 we visited the parish of St. Vital at Fort Garry. After assisting at the High Mass which was sung by Rev. M. Cormier, we administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 17 children and 1 adult.

In our remarks to the congregation we referred to the decoration of the church which was recently done, and it was with deep sincerity that we congratulated the Pastor and the people. In truth the church now presents a very real attractive appearance. But what is more important even than the decoration is the spirit which it manifests, namely, a deeper interest in the Parish Church and a generous co-operation with the Pastor in all that he is trying to do for the betterment of the Parish. We could not but be pleased with the evidence of goodwill and support and thus confident we have no hesitation in predicting a bright future for the parish of St. Vital.

As far as we can see, the Parish is in excellent shape, it has made progress, the real parish spirit of co-operation is evident and there is no reason why St. Vital should not make greater progress and in the years to come Father Cormier deserves a great deal of credit. It is with much satisfaction that we bless both the pastor and people."

† ALFRED A. SINNOTT,
Arch. of Winnipeg

* * *

In 1934 the Solemn Dedication and blessing of the Cross of our Parish cemetery took place. An event worthy of remembering.

On September 4th, 1934, His Grace the Archbishop accompanied by the Pastor and Monseigneur Rheame, Father Dumas, O. M., Cap. Father Stronks, Father Dumas, Father Plamen and Father Landersdale solemnly blessed the cross placed in the center. This cross was the work of Mr. J. B. Corbett of our parish, and stands there as a mark of affection and love of God of Mr. Corbett. We thank him for it.

The procession, under the leadership of Mr. Alphonse Devienne, presented quite a spectacle. Sermons were given in French and English by Father Dumas, O. M. I., and in Plamud by Father Plamen.

* * *

In 1931 the Ladies of St. Anne were re-organized and since have been always quite a help to our parish. Also the Children of Mary.

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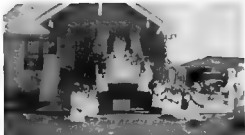
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A Sanctuary Club was formed and great credit is due these boys for their help and behaviour in the Sanctuary.

The Church Committee since my coming here has always been most faithful to the parish, and has helped the pastor in all things.

* * *

To-day during this Seven Jubilee of our parish we may be well proud of St. Vital of Paris, France, as is a one of the flourishing parishes in the great Archdiocese of Winnipeg. I mean a well-banded banner although being of different nationality the Chinese and Catholics speak in yet more mutually understandable. There are a goodly number speaking American English and English speaking and the remainder of different ethnic European extraction.

The day is twenty-fifth anniversary of its solemn erection at which I look back at these years even to its very beginning in 1861 and although progress has not been as facile as other centers it may yet be proud of its achievements. We know that he who sheds darkness has darkness yet to overcome a never ending struggle with it was being back happiness and prosperity. Thus we may have in the past fostered our parishes whom a parish was so necessary for a people. And as a parish in the hands and under the patronage of its first missionaries after whom the parish began and during this name of a Missionary Society and in our parishes under one and our religious, his name and we pray him to look down upon that old chapel a new he is not where he once offered up the Holy Sacrifice of Mass and to bless our efforts that we to-day are making in trying to continue the work of God and of his missionary to the spiritual needs of the people who were also so dear to his missionary heart.

And so may God quickly call to the ranks of recognized Saints of His heavenly throne the one whom we are so proud to pray and who will then be the patron of our parish.

To our Parish we say *Ad Multos Annos*!"

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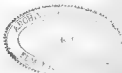
Le Curé de la paroisse St Vital de Port Garry, le Comité d'Eglise et les différents comités en charge des fêtes remercient bien sincèrement les personnes qui ont fait des dons et les annonceurs. Ils seraient très reconnaissants si les lecteurs de cette modeste brochure voulaient bien les encourager toutes les fois qu'il leur sera possible de le faire.

MAURICE COURNOYER,
Curé.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Pastor, the Church Committee and the various Committees of the Anniversary celebrations wish to thank most sincerely our donors in form of gifts or advertisements, and would be pleased that our readers patronize them whenever possible.

REV. M. COURNOYER,
Pastor.



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(EST. 1905)

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